

two or three are gathered together in his name; it is true that he leads them and guides them, and helps their infirmities; but it is also true that he would have us "hold fast the form of sound words," and call things by their *right names*; and we neither glorify God nor benefit men by misapplying words, misrepresenting facts, nor by endeavoring to make things appear more important than they actually are.

The Sunday School

THE INFLUENCE OF SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHER

J. H. GARNES

Two weeks ago we had the pleasure to be present at a Sunday-school Convention and heard it advocated by a Christian professor that one who is not a Christian could be a Sunday-school teacher. We took the opposite side of the question. We believe no one who is not a true child of God should attempt to stand before a class of boys and girls, when their minds are most susceptible to good impressions, stamped on their character, which are essentially necessary to enable them to fight the battles of life. Have we not all frequently saw many go out in the world fully equipped as far as physical training and intellectual attainments are concerned, but whose morals unfit them for the places which they aspire to fill. The most important factor for any one in all avenues of life is a good moral character, as this is prized above all other qualifications which they may possess. If this be true is it not then well for the teacher that he be a Christian so as to instill the moral and religious principles into the plastic minds of these boys and girls? Some one has truly said, "It is better to inspire the heart with a noble sentiment than to fill the mind with the truths of science."

Influence is a power flowing in upon one to shape, or sway, or bias him. To influence in the right way the teacher should first be a good Christian, and second he should be filled with subject which he attempts to teach if he would influence his pupils by his words and endeavors. No steamer's pilot had ever a greater need of knowledge of the trackless ocean's pathway than has the teacher—pilot in guiding an immortal soul in the life voyage over the sea of probation. The teacher can only influence when this influence radiates from a character, pure, moral and undefiled. Our acts, habits and associates are all woven into our characters, and are auxiliaries in the moulding of the characters of those around us.

We are in the world to accomplish a mission, and our lives and acts should always be such as God would look on with favor. In conclusion we would say, no teacher has a right to be satisfied with an attempt to instruct his pupils faithfully and well without, also, endeavoring to exert over them an influence for good in the world and so prepare them, that when death comes they will be

prepared for the world beyond. "A teacher may raise a marble shaft or build a temple, and time will destroy it, but if he mould a human mind he has reared a monument to his memory that will stand thro all eternity."

The Potter's Clay

Read at the Plain Township, Ohio, Sabbath school convention, by Mrs. S. H. Yeater.

"Character is a coin that passes current and at par value in all countries." But character is not reputation nor is reputation character. "What we *are* constitutes our character, what is *attributed* to us makes our reputation." "Posterity" estimates men not so much by what they *did* as by what they *were*." A man may have a good character, but by some untoward event or accident his reputation may be damaged, for a time at least. "But what belongs to a man will come to him," a thoughtful preacher once said to some college students. Moral worth will pretty surely be made manifest, and reputation correspond some day to character; not simply in a future life, but usually in this. "There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, and hid that shall not be known." Who would not prefer to have good character even tho he be misjudged, to enjoying a good reputation when in reality possessing a bad character. How startling to society and how painful to many is the unmasking of a man whose reputation has been spotless while his character has been unprincipled and low. A man's goodness is an internal harmony, preferable to every external benefit." Surely the consciousness of moral integrity lends to a man self respect and self confidence and eventually brings to him the respect and good will of his fellowman. We would like to impress upon all and especially upon the young the importance of a good character. This is a man's selfhood; something that no one can take away from him, while reputation without character is a bubble that will vanish at a touch from some rough hand. In Jeremiah, 18th chapter and second verse, we find these words, "Arise and go down to the potter's house." Following this injunction a short time ago, we visited H. B. Camp's Clay Works. Although they were not making tile while we were there, we felt repaid for our trip by the useful and practical lessons we learned.

We noted the crude state of the clay used and its plasticity. This clay is there: it has been given in its crude state with wonderful possibilities lying hidden in its yellow looking body. Man then gathers it up and manipulates it by machinery, until it becomes so plastic that he can form it into whatever shape he desires. While in this plastic and pliable condition it is dropped into a large hopper and run thru a press and comes forth a tile; a well shaped and defined article quite unlike the shapeless mass that was dropped into the hopper. The tile is now formed, but care must be exercised in the handling of it or some defect may be left upon its surface while in this impressionable stage. For instance, one of the workmen showed us a tile

upon which he had written his name during this stage: the heating that followed only deepened the letters made and as the tile became solid his name was burned into its surface to remain there until the tile itself should be destroyed.

We have learned that after the tile is formed it still needs something to fix this form solid and permanent. This is done by placing them in a large oven or kiln and heating them.

But here, too, care must be used to regulate the heat so as not to overheat and thus melt and warp the tile into a number of twisted and illshapen vessels that must be cast among the refuse. Another valuable lesson is forced upon us, that is, that it requires knowledge and experience as well as care to handle the clay properly; to understand its quality, to shape it properly and to regulate the heat while burning it and in order to produce "an article that will pass on the market," as the foreman of the tile works said, when we remarked as they were carrying out the damaged tile and breaking them up. Why some of those look as tho they might be used for something. "No," said he, "they will not pass on the market," and turning to the workmen said, "just throw them into the dump."

Then with a smile he said to us, "Oh, we potters do not get discouraged at one or two failures, but keep on working, sometimes for years, before we master the work. We just keep on trying until we accomplish what we desire."

Let us apply these lessons in our Sunday schools. We have the material given to us. It or the greater part of it is in its most plastic condition. The impressions made, then, should be good ones, true ones, correct ones, because they are helping to form characters that are to become useful and true ones, or vice versa. It is said that the faults of the youth become the vices of the man. One of old has also said, "that as the twig is bent so the tree will incline." Bearing these facts in mind, does it not behoove us as parents, as Christians, as Sunday school workers to take this pliable, plastic material that God has given us, and mould it with good impressions and good environment that it may come forth good, well formed characters, and then, by the heating process of discipline cause them to become fixed and solid in upright principles and in righteousness.

If we, the workmen are careless some of these human characters that are being formed will correspond to the ill-shapen, ill-formed tile; some of them will look tolerably fair, but many of them when brought to the test will not come up to the required standard. They can only, like the tile, be utilized for filling in for others to work over, or worse yet, only fit for the dump. Who wants to be the dumpings. Our Sunday-schools are designed to help in this training school of life. Perhaps few of us appreciate how much influence for good they really embody. But they have not reached perfection. Like the potters we must keep on trying and advancing.